
Order of Daedalians

Frank P. Lahm, Flight 9

MARCH 2003



MARCH MEETING: Officer's Club

Third Tuesday, 18 Mar 2003, 1830 Social Hour, 1930 Dinner

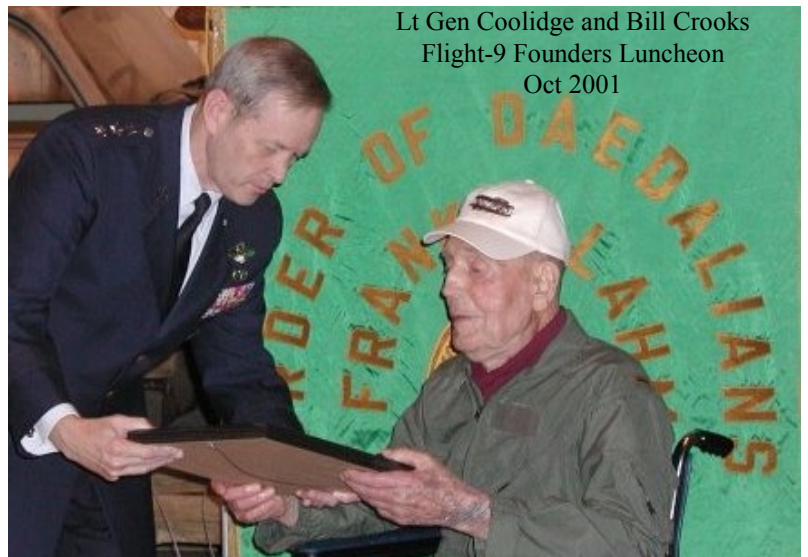
Our speaker for March is LTC Mike Greenlee, a USAir pilot who will speak on his DC-9 wind shear accident. **Reservations:** Call our Provost Marshall, Mike Gingrich (426-5675) by 2100hrs Sunday, 16 March. For those people who prefer E-mail, Mike will take E-mail reservations at lahmreservation@cs.com. *Cancellations must be made by noon Monday to avoid being billed for the price of the meal.*



Flight Captain's Log: 03-03: Peet Odgers conducted the meeting since Ron Hunt, the new Flight Captain, was out of town. Peet introduced the newly elected Flight Officers. In lieu of a speaker, a short tape was shown of the B-2 dropping GPS guided bombs from 42000 ft against 16 targets, and then a B47 last flight from the desert to the Castle AFB museum.

Six members of Flight 9 and Lt. Gen. Charles H. Coolidge Jr., paid tribute to Bill Crooks at a funeral service in Mount Vernon, Ohio, on Sunday 23 February 2003. Gen. Coolidge's comments at the funeral service celebrated the life of this aviation pioneer. I personally felt that it was an honor to attend the funeral service and, more importantly, to be in the same Daedalian Flight as Bill Crooks, the last surviving World War I military aviator. I believe there should be some symbol of this significant fact and honor hanging in the Daedalian room for the entire world to see. I believe a similar remembrance should be hanging in National Headquarters. I would like to make this a subject of discussion the March 18 meeting.

Our speaker at the March 18 meeting will be LTC Mike Greenlee, AFRC and US Air Captain. Mike is currently flying the Boeing 737 for US Air and flew the F-4 and F-16 in the Air Force Reserves. Mike will be talking to us about his Wind Shear accident in the DC-9 at Charlotte a few years ago.



Lt Gen Coolidge and Bill Crooks
Flight-9 Founders Luncheon
Oct 2001

Volabamus Volamus, Larry Bogemann, Deputy Flight Captain



NOTAM: Last Flight 15 Feb: 2Lt Bill Crooks, 109, was the last founder member of the Daedalians Order. He was also the oldest living military pilot known. Following is an excerpt from the Columbus Dispatch on Feb 24th:

Yesterday, a half-dozen retired Air Force pilots in the Daedalians -- along with Lt. Gen. Charles H. Coolidge Jr., from the top brass at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base -- joined the tribute.

Most of them flew jets in the Vietnam era. Crooks flew a Curtiss "Jenny," a two-man biplane, and earned his silver pilot's wings in 1918. He was still training stateside when



the armistice was signed Nov. 11, 1918, bringing World War I to an end.

Just imagine, the general told the mourners: "We would wonder what was it like to fly with Snoopy and the Red Baron. Bill actually lived in those times."

But early flight wasn't all that defined the life of William R. Crooks, who was born in 1893 and raised in Missouri.

After the war, the flyboy in the dashing uniform met Pauline Jeans -- the woman he would marry -- and the attraction was immediate.

"The uniform -- that did it, oh yes," their daughter, Carmen Rothchild, said yesterday.

Crooks graduated from the University of Missouri with a degree in mechanical engineering and later worked for what is now Rolls-Royce. In 1951, the company moved to Mount Vernon, about 40 miles northeast of Columbus, and Crooks became chief engineer.

He obtained 30 patents for the company and, after retiring, worked on the first anti-ballistic missile system for the National Academy of Science in Washington in the mid-1960s.

After leaving the military, he never piloted a plane again.



NOTAM: Membership: As of this printing, all but 23 of you have sent in dues (\$10) for 2003. If the mailing address on this newsletter begins with 2002, then we have not received your 2003 dues. Please contact membership if you have questions.



NOTAM: Aviation Cadet Class 54-ABC. This month's story is about two cadets who were involved in mishaps during USAF Basic Flight Training at Greenville AFB, Mississippi. Unlike Primary Flight Training where we had civilian flight instructors, basic training was conducted by Air Force flight instructors. We flew the T-28A "Trojan" in the first phase of basic and the T-33A "Shooting Star" in the second phase.

Part 2 - Basic Flight Training

Dead-Stick Landing on the Mississippi River:

Most of the instructors in my training flight were recalled World War II pilots who worked hard to make the training program a success. However, there were a few cadets who gave some of the instructor's heartburn. During the T-28 training phase, we were introduced to our first formation flying. The T-28 proved to be a very stable aircraft in formation and most students readily adapted to it. However, there was one extreme case that happened

when one cadet refused to fly formation after his first attempt. He spent many hours walking the tour path, but he never changed his mind. He finally admitted to the Flight Training Commander that the only reason he joined the Air Force was to learn to fly so that later he could become an airline pilot. He further stated that airline pilots didn't have to fly formation, so he felt it made no sense to fly formation in the Air Force! The misguided cadet was promptly washed out of the flight-training program.



The first mishap that happened to our class occurred during a T-28 formation flight. An instructor was leading a flight of four down the Mississippi River. The flight was in a right echelon formation and only 50 feet above the river. Without warning, the number four T-28's engine suddenly seized, the prop twisted off and disappeared into the river. The T-28, which was being flown by Cadet Hall, was too low for Hall to attempt a bailout. Fortunately, Hall was lined up to a sandbar directly ahead. He touched down with gear up on the sandbar, which was not very long, but it had a tree trunk protruding from it. The tree trunk tore up the bottom of Hall's T-28. But it brought the T-28 to an abrupt halt! By the time the remaining flight-of-three circled back, Hall had opened his canopy, climbed out of the cockpit and was waving an "okay" signal. A nearby fisherman, who witnessed the entire event, motored over and rescued Cadet Hall from the sandbar.

The Tragic Bridge Mishap: In 1947, I saw for the first time, a P-80A when it put on an acrobatic demonstration for the public at Long Beach AFB, California. I was very impressed with the P-80A's performance and six years later, I was about to fly its trainer version, the T-33A. The T-33 phase had no serious incidents until one final requirement night checkout followed by a solo flight the same night. It took the cadets one or two flights with an instructor and a series of successful touch-and-go landings to complete the checkout. Following my checkout, I took off about 2300 for a scheduled 45 minute solo flight in the local area. No stars were visible because of a high overcast, but I could easily see the lights of the scattered towns that kept me oriented in the local area. After an uneventful flight, I landed and checked in with flight operations. I was then told the shocking news about a phone call from the state highway patrol reporting that an aircraft, possibly a T-33, had struck the road bridge spanning the Mississippi River just west of Greenville!



We soon learned whose T-33 it was when the missing cadet failed to land at his scheduled time. The question then was did he eject from a disabled T-33 and if he did, where? When the main wreckage was found strewn across a sandbar just beyond the bridge, the fatally injured cadet was still strapped to his seat. No specific cause for the mishap was given at the time, but a picture of what happened started to emerge. It was later revealed that on the

night of the mishap, two cadets were walking out to their assigned T-33s to fly their first night solos, when the mishap cadet turned to the other cadet and said, "Tonight's the night." "For what?" asked the other cadet. "I'm going to fly under the Greenville Bridge!" replied the mishap cadet. The other cadet did not take this announcement seriously, but laughed it off as a joke. The reason for this was that someone in a previous cadet class had flown under the Greenville Bridge in a T-28, but on the daytime. So, the question joked about was who would be fool hardy enough to try this stunt in a T-33, especially at night?

An instructor briefed the final story on this mishap to us. The mishap cadet was considered a weak student, but he had met all minimum requirements. But he must have convinced himself that he had to fly under the bridge to prove his worth as a pilot. He probably approached the bridge low just above the river at some unknown airspeed. The top of the bridge consists of a truss superstructure adorned with lights that are turned on at night. Underneath the bridge are two vertical concrete supports. Except for a light located between each support, it would be very dark under the bridge at night. It appears that the mishap cadet was aiming for a point between the lights under the bridge. Actually, he was lined up with one of the concrete supports. At the last second, he realized his mistake and attempted to pull up. But he had run out of clearance space and crashed through the superstructure of the bridge. The instructor continued to explain how boats and barges traveling on the river can use one of the lights underneath the bridge as a guide to safely pass between the supports at night or in a dense fog. If the mishap cadet had aimed at one of the lights underneath the bridge instead of attempting to fly between the lights, he probably could have made it. The next day, the Flight Training

Commander drew a circle around the Greenville Bridge on a wall map with a five-mile radius. He then declared, "Anyone caught flying within or near this circle is automatically washed out of the flying program!" No one in our class challenged this order.

Marty Martinez

Frank P. Lahm, Flight 9 Officers

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